OFFICIAL CALL TO
THE 40TH ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE
VIRGINIA CONFERENCE
UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

OCTOBER 27-28, 2012
AT
BLACKSTONE CONFERENCE
AND RETREAT CENTER
707 FOURTH STREET
BLACKSTONE, VA 23824

ALL UNITED METHODIST WOMEN
ARE URGED TO ATTEND!
Lillian Sloan  
CHAIR NOMINATIONS

VIRGINIA CONFERENCE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN ORGANIZATION

We, the Committee on Nominations, recommend the following nominees for the Virginia Conference United Methodist Women Organization for the term beginning January 2013:

Joyce Winston, President
Ruby Lee Anderson, Vice President
Jean Swann, Secretary
Geraldine Sanderson, Treasurer

OTHER ELECTED LEADERS

Mission Coordinators for:
- Spiritual Growth: Nancy Walsh
- Education and Interpretation: Sue Boltz
- Social Action: Monica Sprague
- Membership Nurture and Outreach: Mary Jane Rawley
- Secretary of Program Resources: Linda Porter
- Communication Coordinator: Lisa Hite
- Chair of Committee on Nominations: Joyce McKay

APPOINTED MEMBERS (voice and vote)

Hispanic Language Coordinator: Vacant
Korean Language Coordinator: Vacant

COMMITTEE ON NOMINATIONS

Class of 2013: Lillian Sloane
Class of 2013: Joyce McKay
Class of 2014: Annette Austin
Class of 2014: Ruth Wilkinson
Class of 2015: Jessie Swann
Class of 2016: Marilyn Blagg
Class of 2016: Carolyn Smith

CHARTER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE POLICIES

Additional member: Lillian Sloane (class of 2015)
District President: Brenda Ne Smith
Member of the Executive Committee: Linda Porter

Committee on Nominations: Lillian B. Sloane, Chair
- Chris Cole
- Pat Owens
- Joyce McKay
- Annette Austin
- Ruth Wilkinson
- Jessie Swann
Oh my, they have asked me to be the Coordinator for Membership, Nurture & Outreach. God is telling me to say yes but…..I don’t know what to do or how to proceed. What can I do?

Do you know how to build a relationship? The easiest way to get new members for your unit is to get to know the people. Ask a (new or not so new) friend to come with you to see the United Methodist Women in Action. Ask the woman who always helps with your projects to join. We ask for your help, why don’t you want to become a member too? Be sure you let them know that no one woman can do everything UMW does. There are enough hours in the days or years to do that. We all do what we can and by each one doing something, we get things done.

I just returned from Mozambique where our Volunteer in Mission Team visited in the name of the Virginia Conference UMW. We went to build relationships. For those of you who saw Lydia and Victoria after Assembly in St. Louis, we continued our relationship with them. Lydia remains the president of the women in Mozambique until elections (October 2012). Victoria is continuing in her position with the church there.

As we visited at the Widows’ homes, they showed us extreme hospitality. I have not been to Mozambique since 2009, yet when one of the widows saw me, she excitedly pulled another lady over saying “it’s Susannah!” It was the highlight of my trip. There I finally understood what relationship really means.

We toured their new homes (new since I had been there) and proudly showed us the solar panels which allow them to have electric lights in their rooms. They had picked tangerines (right off the trees) to refresh us and sent us away with two huge bags of them. They taught us to process cassava roots so that the “flour” from it can be used. These widows, some of whom are in their 80s or more, work harder to process these roots than most of us work in a week. They can sell some of this but they must use most of what they can make to feed themselves.

Our Team to Mozambique paid to have a new solar panel installed on one of the three dorms. Someone had stolen the panel from it. This one was to be installed differently so that theft would be harder. We also paid to have the corn grinder fixed. This was a gift from the women of Virginia to the widows of Mozambique. This was building a relationship with our sisters. This was a way of helping our sisters in Christ to help themselves.

Membership, Nurture & Outreach – it is hard to have one without the other. Take a look to see who wants to have that relationship with other women and then invite them to join you. In other words, reach out and nurture. The members will then come.

Remember to encourage your young women to ‘MAXIMIZE YOUR MISSION ENERGY’, September 21 and 22 at Wesley Community Center in Richmond. A brochure is attached and can be found on the www.vaumw.org website.

The membership count for this year is due to the conference by December 31st. You local district Membership Nurture & Outreach coordinator will let you know when they need this count. Please send it in as it is important for many reasons.
It is very difficult for me to contain my excitement as I compose these remarks for the next issue of THE LINK. In just two days I shall embark upon an adventure of a lifetime. I am joining the VIM group of United Methodist Women led by Sue Boltz and Chris Cole to visit some of our sisters in Africa. I have wanted to visit Africa for a very long time because, you see, my husband and I have led mission studies from years past; and as you might expect from two educators, we brought as much of the culture, artifacts, games, books, and clothing as time and resources allowed. The continent of Africa brings back many memories. It is one thing to read about and quite another to experience first hand.

We return from Africa on Sunday, July 15, 2012, and I shall be home long enough to pick up another suitcase and head to Lake Junaluska, North Carolina to serve as a delegate to SEJ. I have been studying the many fine attributes of the Episcopal Nominees across the Southeastern Jurisdiction. By the time you read this, I shall have asked you to pray for all of the delegates as we seek to discern God’s will in the election of bishops.

It will not be long before you will be collecting data and completing the 2012 reports: Mission Today, Social Action, Reading Program, Deceased UMW Members, Candle burning, and Traveling Reports of District Mission Dolls. I encourage all of you to press forward that we might reach and exceed our Pledge to Mission for the Virginia Conference. Thank you for the special effort you expend to insure that we, indeed, are putting our Faith, Hope, and Love in Action for Women, Children, and Youth around the world.

The Virginia Conference United Methodist Women are so blessed to have Harriett Jane Olson, Deputy General Secretary, as the keynote speaker for our 40th Annual Meeting. The meeting will be held at the Blackstone Conference and Retreat Center. Harriett is top executive of UMW. I look forward to each of you hearing her speak and having the opportunity to meet her. She will be with us on Saturday, October 27, 2012.

I would be remiss if I did not share how much your district newsletters have meant to me. They exhibit strong evidence that our organization consists of members all across the state who are dedicated to make a difference in the lives of others. They serve as resources filled with inspiration and information, and they offer opportunities for participation that make us stronger leaders. Local presidents, please take advantage of all they offer by sharing and encouraging your members to participate at all levels. Keep up the good work.
THE PURPOSE OF MISSION TODAY IS TO fulfill the PURPOSE of UMW by:
- Energizing United Methodist Women to be more involved in mission through prayer, study and action;
- Increasing contacts between units and mission personnel and projects;
- Encouraging use of mission resources; and
- Expanding concepts of mission including social justice as mission

Becoming a Mission Today Unit is a way to increase emphasis on what United Methodist Women have been doing for more than a century: turning faith, hope and love into action on behalf of women, children and youth around the world.

Period covered in this report: September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013

How to become a Mission Today Unit:
All units must complete item # 1. The number of additional items required is then dependent on the size of your unit.

( ) A MISSION TODAY UNIT: includes eight additional items, including four (*) items, or, for Units with 15 or fewer members, a minimum of four other items, including two (*) items.

( ) A MISSION TODAY SILVER UNIT: 13 additional items, including at least six (*) items.

( ) A MISSION TODAY GOLD UNIT: 20 additional items, including at least twelve (*) items.

* 1. THE UNIT WILL MAKE AND MEET ITS PLEDGE TO MISSION. (Must be completed)

(*) 2. At least two members, other than a District or Conference Officer, attend the District or Conference Annual Meeting.

(*) 3. At least one member, (other than a District or Conference officer that has their way paid by District or Conference), attend the Conference Spiritual Life Retreat or the District Spiritual Life Event. (If a District or Conference officer goes to the Spiritual Life retreat paying their own way, they may count themselves as going representing their unit.)

(*) 4. Have at least one member, other than a District or Conference officer, attend Mission Encounter 2013 / Mission u 2013 (School of Christian Mission), or a District Mission Celebration/Mission School event.

(*) 5. Sponsor a young woman to attend the Conference or a District Young Women’s Event. Name of event attendee: _______________________________

(*) 6. Use the Prayer Calendar at each Unit Meeting to pray for mission workers and mission projects for women, children, and youth.

(*) 7. Use at least two programs from the UMW Program Book during the year. Which ones: __________________________________________

(*) 8. Each Unit, Circle, or Subgroup include a “response Moment” where an item from response magazine is lifted up as a way to tell a mission story.

(*) 9. The Unit, Circle, Subgroup, have at least one current mission study during the year.
   Which one: ________________________________

(*) 10. Include having the UMW Purpose at every meeting.

(*) 11. Qualify as a Five- or Six-Star Unit by contributing to five or six Channels of Mission Giving.

(*) 12. Increase the local unit Pledge to Mission for the coming year.

(*) 13. Invite a District or Conference Officer, other than a unit member, to one of your Unit meetings during the year and/or United Methodist Women’s Sunday.
(*)14. Select a mission project which is supported by funds from Women’s Division (Wesley Community Service Center), or the 2013 Ministry Grants of VA (listed in the conference yearbook) and visit and/or contribute needed resources. Name of the project: _____________________________

(*)15. Add at least two new members to the roll, or one new member for Units with 15 or fewer members.

(*)16. Have at least two members who subscribe to response magazine.

(*)17. At least two members participate in the Reading Program and complete Plan I.

(*)18. Implement the Charter for Racial Justice Policies in one way during the year. Some ideas include:
   - have two or more members attend a District Charter for Racial Justice Program/Workshop
   - Have members read books and articles about other races and cultures; give report to unit.
   - Plan a joint unit meeting with a unit of a different racial/ethnic background.
   - Hold a joint Vacation Bible School with a church of a different racial/ethnic background.
   - Encourage your church to support a refugee family.
   - Write to elected representatives to support legislation affecting issues such as immigration, affirmative action, programs serving a low-income population, civil rights, etc.
   Describe what you did ________________________________________________

( ) 19. One or more members participate in hands-on mission such as gleaning, working in a food pantry or clothes closet, bagging potatoes, etc.
   Describe what you did:__________________________________________________

( ) 20. Have “Green Meetings” or make some other special effort toward saving God’s earth (i.e. recycling, using glasses instead of disposable cups, etc.) Describe what you did:__________________________________________________

( ) 21. Participate in the Campaign for Children (Children’s Sabbath Service, support public education, etc.). Some ideas for action:
   - Help sponsor a church or community program for children or youth needs.
   - Get involved with children in mentoring or tutoring programs.
   - Visit and show support to your local schools, (attend school board meetings, sponsor a class, provide funds or items of special need)
   - Write congressional representatives regarding children’s issues.
   Describe what you did ___________________________________________________

( ) 22. Have at least one member attend the United Methodist Day at the Virginia General Assembly.

( ) 23. Have at least one member attend UMW Day at Ferrum College.

( ) 24. Provide at least ten UMCOR kits and funds for shipping for the VA Annual Conference.

( ) 25. Members shall write at least once a year to five mission workers listed in the Prayer Calendar.

( ) 26. Have at least one person join the UMW’s Action Network to receive and respond to legislative information. The on-line registration can be found at: http://new.gbgm-umc.org/umw/act/network/

UNIT/CHURCH ____________________________________________________________
Number of members in your unit ____________________
President/Contact Person__________________________________________
Phone ________________________    E-mail _________________________
Mail to <Your District UMW Mission E&I>
by: <date set by your district, or by September 1, 2013>
“He has told you, human one, what is good and what the Lord requires from you: to do justice, embrace faithful love, and walk humbly with your God”. Micah 6:8

Greetings!

As Christians, we are called to be advocates for justice. When we perform acts of justice, we make God’s world a better place for everyone. We demonstrate our belief in a faithful and just God when we work together on social justice issues. We must learn, pray and act when we work to make a difference. Our Conference Social Action priorities are: Domestic Violence, Human Trafficking, and Health Reform. All of us can choose an issue and learn all we can about it. What are the causes of the injustice, how can we get involved in changing attitudes that lead to injustice, how can we get others involved? Social action is not the work of one person. Social action needs many people working together to create change and to bring about justice.

We must also pray for God’s guidance as we work for justice. God will lead us to sources that help us to step out in faith and work for justice. God will give us strength and faith to speak out when we see injustices in our communities and around the world. Once we have learned about an injustice and prayed for God’s guidance, we must put what we’ve learned and prayed about into action by getting involved and making a difference. We must contact our legislators, who make laws that affect all of us, and let them know our stance on the laws that are being enacted and how they have an adverse effect on God’s people. We must work in our communities to see that everyone is treated fairly. When one person hurts, we all hurt. When one person is treated unjustly, we are all treated unjustly. As United Methodist Women, we cannot sit idly and do nothing about the injustices we see. We must put our Christian beliefs about social justice into action and make a difference. I am proud that United Methodist Women are leading advocates for justice. We boldly step out and speak up for justice.

As the year draws to a close and our UMW Annual Meeting nears, I need your social action award reports by Oct. 1. I know units have been working to achieve the social actions goals and I need the district social action coordinators to get their reports to me so that I can present the district certificates at our UMW Annual Meeting. If you have questions or concerns, contact me at (804) 674-5220 or e-mail me at lpfromnc@msn.com. The Social Action Award reporting form is on the social action website of the Conference UMW website.

Thanks for all you do to right the wrongs of our world and to bring God’s peace and justice to the world.
“It was at this time that He went off to the mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in prayer to God.” - Luke 6:12

Sometimes the demands of my schedule are overwhelming and I find myself awake in the middle of the night. Whenever I fight the restlessness, just tossing and turning and trying to go back to sleep, I find myself exhausted the next day. But, sometimes I have enough sense to recognize that perhaps it's the Lord Who has awakened me. I will get up and start pouring out my heart to Him. And you know what? Those impromptu sessions in the middle of the night are some of my most rewarding times. These moments create an opportunity to have un rushed time alone with God. I'm able to hear His voice and understand His guidance. It's like He speaks in a special way that I haven't really been hearing Him, and I treasure those time, even though sometimes I am slow to recognize that I need to get up and get out of the bed. And as a bonus, I don't wake up exhausted, but refreshed.

Realize God blesses you greatly when you spend regular time alone with Him. Take advantage of opportunities that present themselves; it may just be that God is trying to squeeze some one-on-one time into your busy schedule!

REMINDER: Reading Program reports are due into your Local Unit and/or District Secretary of Program Resources in August/September timeframe. Please BE COUNTED if you read Reading Program Books or took a study at the Mission Encounter 2012. Study books DO count toward your Reading Program. Forms for the District Secretaries of Program Resources are online or you can call or email me for a copy.

We had some wonderful books to read in the past year. The 2013 book list will be out in September and I will try and get in online as soon as possible. I will have the 2013 books available in the book store at Annual meeting along with the 2013 Prayer Calendars and 2013 Program Books.

REMEMBER: you will need to purchase your own Program Books this year.

Hope to see you all at Annual Meeting in the Book Room. It will be busy so come early and stop in!

Gail Sutcliffe, Virginia Conference UMW Secretary of Program Resources
703-490-3381  gfvs43@aol.com
Harriett Jane Olson

Harriett Jane Olson has served as deputy general secretary of the Women’s Division of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church since Sept. 4, 2007. As such, she is chief executive officer of the Women’s Division, the national administrative and policymaking arm of United Methodist Women. United Methodist Women is a nearly 800,000-member organization within the United Methodist Church in the United States. Its purpose is to foster spiritual growth, develop leaders and advocate for justice. United Methodist Women members give about $20 million a year for mission work related to women, children and youth in the United States and around the world.

A Harvard graduate and attorney, Ms. Olson was a partner specializing in real estate and environmental law. Prior to leading the Women’s Division, Ms. Olson served at the United Methodist Publishing House as senior vice-president for publishing, editor for church school publications and United Methodist Church book editor. She supervised a staff of 125-150 persons responsible for the development, production and trade distribution of resources from Abingdon Press, Cokesbury and Kingswood Books.

Ms. Olson said United Methodist Women’s work is rooted in the past and poised for the future, as the needs of women, children and youth around the world continue to demand the organization’s attention.

"United Methodist Women's story is of powerful women who overcame real limitations and took the church to a new place," Ms. Olson said. "For example, in the 1920s, United Methodist Women's predecessors were active serving women, children and youth wherever non-English-speaking populations grew up in response to labor demands. We have these demands springing up everywhere today. We still have work to do."

This holistic approach to being Christian women is at the heart of United Methodist Women, Ms. Olson said. She explained:

"Critical to United Methodist Women is the combination of spiritual formation, leadership development, personal engagement in mission work and social advocacy. In the spirit of John Wesley and in accordance with our United Methodist self-understanding, these are interdependent approaches.

"Women do mission in a unique way. They are empathetic, on-the-ground, standing side by side with women, children and youth. Helping women know they are loved by God, empowered by God, and equipped to live and work for the new creation to which we are called is close to my heart. This requires a blend of political intervention, practical assistance and loving support that I believe United Methodist Women is well positioned to deliver through active units in local congregations.

"United Methodist Women is called to do something not being done by the rest of the church. It's a privilege to stand with women, children and youth. It's a role particularly well connected to our theological DNA as United Methodists: spiritual nurture and action."

Ms. Olson has a bachelor's degree from Houghton College in Houghton, N.Y., where she serves on the board of trustees.
This page is blank for registration form to annual meeting found as an attachment
By now, you are all back from your Mission Encounter courses and gearing up for sharing all that you learned with your units and your districts!

Wasn’t that Poverty Simulation a powerful experience? Remember it is a kit that can be borrowed from the Roanoke District office for an event on your district or zone event. I can tell you how to get more information if you are interested.

Did you make a few knots or stitches in the “Ugly Quilts” we made? These were each labeled “Made for you with love by members of the United Methodist Church”. Lydia Weeks has led this project in her church, for various conference events, and now as a workshop leader at the Mission Encounter 2012. Why “Ugly”? - Because if it was fancy, the homeless person receiving it would have a greater risk of it being stolen…

As UMW we continue to learn about ways that our mission giving makes a difference in the lives of women, children and youth around the world. As women passionate about being a part of God’s mission to the world, I know that you continue to find ways to “think out of the box” and incorporate “mission education” (scripture, thinking, theology, and action) in events that include laity and clergy, men, youth, and others beyond “UMW membership”. Learning about God’s mission to the world is for all of the church.

The themes this year of Haiti (geographical), Poverty (topical) and Immigration in the Bible (Bible Study) lend themselves powerfully to draw others into study and action. Are there new ways that your unit and/or church can reach out to the children with economic, nutritional, or academic needs in your local schools? Are there immigrants in the community that could use extra kindness, language training and resources to meet the needs of their families? These are the acts of justice and mercy that God calls us to do. Share the Good News!

Units are now handing in their Mission Today forms to their respective district E&I leaders. In preparation for your district annual meetings, I hope that you will plan ways to share about the unique mission experiences that the units have described. Remember that our goal is for 75% of the units on a district to be Mission Today units, I hope each district can reach that goal or improved from last year’s percentages.

The more we learn, the more we can share about God’s mission through United Methodist Women, turning faith, hope, and love into action on behalf of women, children and youth around the world.

CANCELLED STAMPS FOR UMCOR

This ongoing project started in 1982. From the beginning through 2011 UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) has received $4,080 from funds received from canceled stamps. United Methodist Women have been faithful in bringing stamps to UMW events. They are sold to a York River District stamp collector and distributor. The receipts for stamp sales are sent to the Conference Treasurer for distribution through UMCOR.

All canceled stamps (except bulk mail stamps) are accepted, foreign stamps are usually more valuable. IMPORTANT: Cut or tear at least 1/4 inch border around the stamp. Do not peel it from the envelope. Leave rows of stamps intact. Place cut stamps in bag or envelope. Please do not mix them in with labels as they go separate places.

E-Mail has lowered the number of stamps we are receiving, very important you save all canceled stamps you receive, bag them and send or bring them to UMW events. It’s amazing how much we can glean from just little pieces of paper that would otherwise be thrown into the garbage! You can make a difference with very little effort. If you have questions, please contact Jean Mims Smith, 757-723-6488 or E-mail: jean-mimssmith@hotmail.com
PURPOSE
OF UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The organized unit of United Methodist Women shall be a community of women whose PURPOSE is to know God and to experience freedom as whole persons through Jesus Christ; to develop a creative, supportive fellowship; and to expand concepts of mission through participation in the global ministries of the church.